

Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind



2013 Annual Report

October 1, 2012 - September 30, 2013

*"Just because a man lacks the use of his eyes
doesn't mean he lacks vision." Stevie Wonder*

In FFY13, RSB closed **246** client cases in
Competitive **Employment** With **annual**
salaries totaling **\$5,184,696**. Those 246
individuals paid **\$1,176,372** in Federal and
State **Taxes**. It will take just under **3 years** to
pay back in taxes what it cost to assist these
blind/visually impaired Missourians into successful
employment.



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Letter from the Chairman of the Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind



Dear Fellow Missourians:

As Chair of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), it is my honor to submit, with my colleagues, the 2013 Annual Report. The SRC is responsible for reviewing, analyzing and advising Missouri Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB), an agency in the Missouri Family Support Division (FSD), on its policies and provision of rehabilitation services to Missourians who are blind or visually impaired. This council is dedicated to working with RSB to assist visually impaired Missourians to become self-supporting and fully participating members of society.

The US Department of Labor continues to report high unemployment rates among working-age people with disabilities. This rate of unemployment, along with increased incidence of diabetic retinopathy and macular degeneration, demonstrates the critical role that RSB serves in the lives of visually impaired Missourians. Improved results from RSB during these challenging times show that RSB and its leadership are committed to its purpose and to meeting the growing challenges facing our fellow citizens.

I offer sincere appreciation to the honorable Jay Nixon, Governor of the State of Missouri, Missouri businesses and other stakeholders for their support in creating an environment so that people with vision loss can realize their full potential.

It is the council's goal that this report provides an informative overview of the activities of RSB and we would be pleased to answer any questions about this report, the operations of RSB, or the work of the council.

Respectfully Submitted,
Clay C. Berry, State Rehabilitation Council Chairman
Director of Education & Rehabilitation at Alphapointe

Message from the Director of the Rehabilitation Services for the Blind

Dear Fellow Missourians:

The annual report presented to you from the Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind for fiscal year 2013 provides information on the Missouri Rehabilitation Services for the Blind employment program for individuals with visual disabilities.

Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) has completed another successful year of providing services to assist blind Missourians. In the fiscal year 2013, RSB completed planned services to assist a total of 270 blind individuals to obtain or retain employment. RSB is proud to say that we have met the performance standard of providing services to assist more blind Missourians to work than in the previous year for the last eight years.

The many and varied alternative techniques and skills used by blind individuals to compensate, accommodate and remediate the resultant barriers to independent living and economic self-sufficiency are significantly different from the accommodations required by persons with other disabilities.

The methodology of instructing the blind and confronting the issues and visual demands of everyday life requires separate and categorical agencies serving blind, highly trained, committed personnel who deliver world class service and the tireless commitment of the separate State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind whose members demonstrate a thorough understanding of blindness and the resultant issues in our society.

In closing, I, along with the Council, offer our sincere appreciation for your interest and support in serving blind Missourians.

Sincerely,
Mark Laird, Deputy Director, Rehabilitation Service for the Blind

Purpose

Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

The Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind was established in February 1993 by Executive Order 93-01 to:

Act as a forum through which citizens with blindness, parents, providers, and other interested Missourians can voice their opinions and constructive criticisms, make recommendations and give public recognition for services being performed on their behalf by RSB;

Serve jointly with RSB in its activities to improve the services, programs and facilities for individuals with blindness and visual impairments;

Receive from RSB information concerning the intents and objectives of RSB so that the Council, in turn, can pass this information on to individuals with blindness.

Functions

The SRC's functions include, but are not limited to, acting in partnership with RSB to:

Review, analyze, and advise RSB regarding RSB's performance of responsibilities, relating especially to eligibility for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services; the extent, scope and effectiveness of VR services that RSB provides;

Assist RSB with the development and review of the State goals and priorities;

Assist in the preparation of the State plan, amendments to the plan, needs assessments, and evaluations;

Conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of VR services and other functions performed by RSB through Consumer Satisfaction Surveys;

Prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor of the State of Missouri, and Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) of the U. S. Department of Education;

Coordinate with other councils within the State;

Advise RSB and provide for coordination in establishing working relationships between RSB and the Statewide Independent Living Council and Centers for Independent Living in Missouri;

Select a pool of individuals to serve as impartial hearing officers for VR applicants and recipients who wish to appeal a decision of RSB.



Year in Review



- ▷ SRC approved the state plan.
- ▷ The council spent a year studying services to kids, the referral process, and analyzing the issues involved.
- ▷ A plan was made to promote the public forums, by expanding the list of people notified and emphasizing the information being provided.
- ▷ The council asked RSB to see if efforts could be made to maximize outreach. They evaluated staff training, how to make referrals, where to leave pamphlets and the accessibility to report where referral are coming from.
- ▷ SRC reviewed and discussed RSB client policy on informed choice, insuring that all staff were educated on the laws of client choice.
- ▷ The council reviewed the client satisfaction survey to ensure accurate responses.
- ▷ SRC provided support and input to the Blind Task Force on the implementation of the Children's Vision Summit 2013.
- ▷ Public forums were held in Kansas City, and St. Louis. Each had a speaker addressing relevant issues.

Public Forum

The SRC continues to hold public forums throughout the state allowing individuals to voice opinions and concerns about the services of RSB. To assist those with difficulty traveling, the council provides phone conferencing .



November: Guest speakers were Mike Josias, Vice President of Recruiting Centene Corp., and Collen Starkloff, Co-Director of Starkloff Disability institute. “The strength of individuals with disabilities working together equals success.”

August: Guest speaker Alice Conway, the Assistant General Counsel for Monsanto, presented “ADA, help with creating equality of opportunity.”

RSB Success Story

Dr. Terence Crowley, D.C.

Terrence Crowley became a Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) client in 1999 while still in high school. Terrence began losing vision at the age of ten as a result of bilateral uveitis, retinal detachment and aphakia. Due to these conditions and his progressive vision loss, Terrence underwent multiple eye surgeries while still attending grade school.



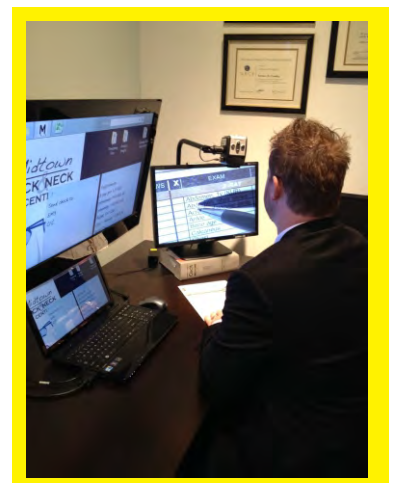
He obtained a bachelor's degree in Human Life Science with tuition support from RSB. While working towards his degree, RSB provided assistance with adaptive aids allowing Mr. Crowley access to print and visual information. Mr. Crowley began work towards his Doctor of Chiropractic (DC) degree. His visual condition progressed and required corneal replacement surgery, resulting in him being legally blind. The medical procedure and recovery time interrupted his studies for two and a half years. Terrence's work ethic enabled him to successfully resume and complete his education. He is now a fully licensed and board certified Chiropractic Physician in the state of Missouri.



In 2011, Dr. Crowley decided to take a chance on his dream of operating a private practice. Dr. Crowley used resources at his disposal to formulate a business plan and seek funding independently. He was then informed by his VRC, Daniel Schoenig, of how RSB may assist his business start-up costs. Following approval of his business plan, RSB was able to assist Dr. Crowley comprehensively in the implementation of this plan. This included support of items ranging from CCTV's and assistive technology to help with medical reports and print information. In addition RSB purchased Chiropractic tables necessary for the effective treatment of patients.

In January 2012, just two months following the birth of his first son, Dr. Crowley opened Midtown Back & Neck Center located in midtown St. Louis at 3141 Locust St., Suite 200. Dr. Crowley states that he approaches patients with a welcoming walk-in policy, allowing for busy individuals to receive effective treatment at their own pace. In March of 2012, Dr. Crowley was featured in a St. Louis Post-Dispatch article which documented his educational and professional accomplishments.

Throughout 2012 and 2013, the Midtown Back & Neck Center saw continued growth. Dr. Crowley states that he is always focused on ways to help his patients and on ways to help blind and visually impaired citizens of St. Louis. Terrence enjoys helping individuals with their health concerns and pain management needs. He continues to educate himself and others on new trends tied to wellness and a healthy lifestyle.



Council Members

The membership of the Council is comprised of no more than 21 individuals appointed by the Governor, with the following representation mandated by the Rehabilitation Act.

At least one representative from each of the following:

- ▶ Statewide Independent Living Council
- ▶ Parent Training and Information Center
- ▶ Client Assistance Program
- ▶ RSB Vocational Counselor
- ▶ Community Rehabilitation Program service provider
- ▶ State education agency responsible for the public education of students with disabilities
- ▶ State workforce investment board
- ▶ Disabilities group representing individuals who are blind
- ▶ Representative of individuals who have blindness, have multiple disabilities, and have difficulty representing themselves due to disability
- ▶ Business, labor and industry
- ▶ Advocacy groups for individuals with blindness or other authorized representatives of individuals with blindness who are unable to represent themselves
- ▶ Current or former recipients of VR services

The Deputy Director of FSD/RSB as an ex-officio member.



Committees

Evaluation Committee:

Chair: Mary Kay Savage

The evaluation committee handles anything that the Council does to evaluate the performance and/or operation of RSB, such as surveys and annual reports.

Governmental Affairs Committee:

Chair: Sheila Wright

The governmental affairs committee works on things happening at the state and federal level and that are governmental in nature.

Planning Committee:

Chair: John Thompson

The planning committee's primary responsibility is the state plan and any other planning operation of the Council. The business network issues will be included in this committee.

Membership Committee:

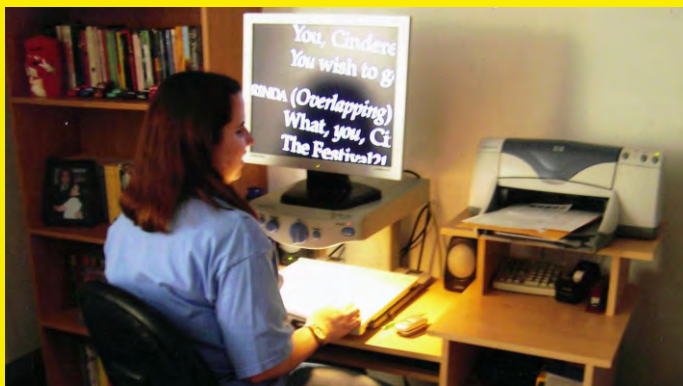
Chair: Donna Borgmeyer

The membership committee works on the membership status of Council members, as well as recruitment of potential new members.

Program & Policy:

Chair: Gene Fleeman

The program policy committee handles new policy and or program items from RSB rather than waiting until the next Council meeting.



During federal fiscal year 2013, RSB opened 455 new cases and served a total of 2,282 consumers in the Vocational Rehabilitation program.

The average annual earnings for a successfully Rehabilitated Client is **\$21,076**

The following information is based on that amount:

MO State Taxes Paid per Rehabilitated Client, **\$1,040**

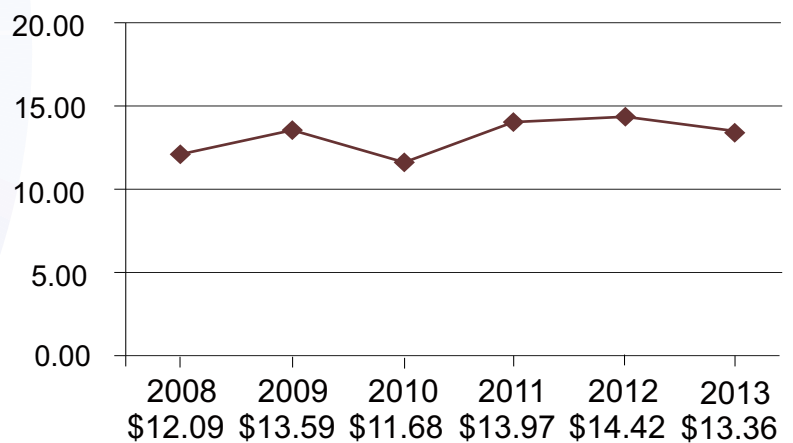
Federal Taxes Paid per Rehabilitated Client, **\$3,742**

Total Taxes Paid per Rehabilitated Client, **\$4,782**

Total Combined Yearly Taxes Paid by all Rehabilitated Clients **\$1,176,372**

\$13.36
Average
Hourly wage

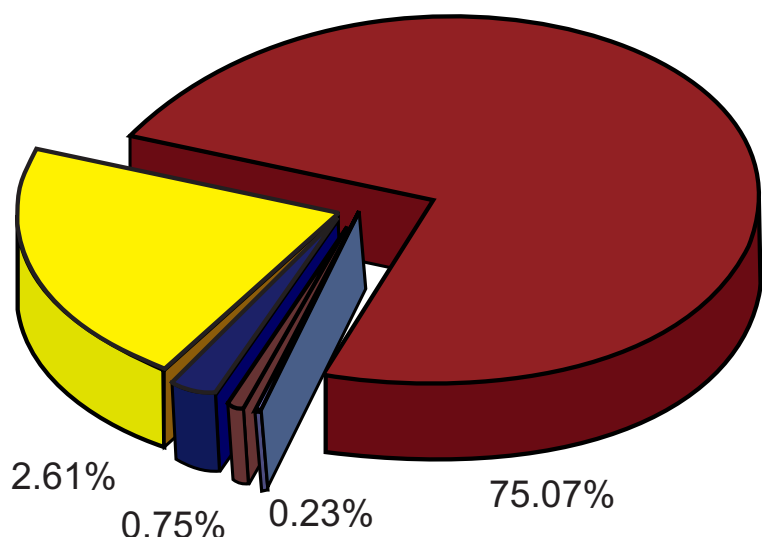
Average Hourly Wage at Closure



State Fiscal Year 2013 Missouri Funding Sources

- Federal Funds
- Blind Pension Funds
- BEST Funds
- Donations
- GR Funds

21.34%



Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services

Individuals who have a severe visual disability encounter some common barriers to employment. Common barriers recognized are: access to print information, transportation, negative attitudes regarding the skills and abilities of the blind, and marketable 21st Century job skills. Rehabilitation Services for the Blind provides valuable services that effectively address these barriers and more.

In federal fiscal year 2013, RSB successfully rehabilitated 270 Missourians in pursuit of their employment goal. The following data profiles show those successful closures:

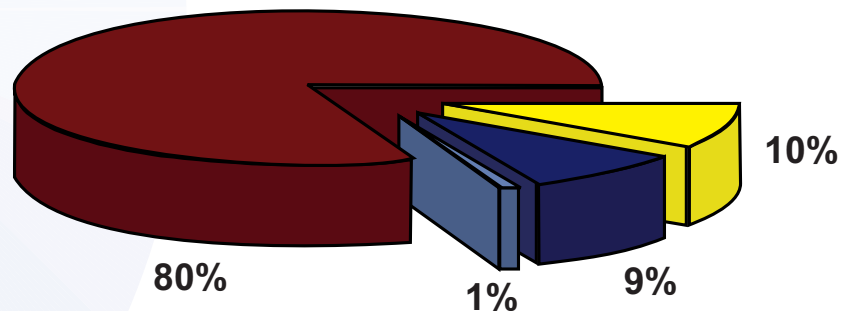
Rehabilitation Rate

72.97% in FFY 2013,
same as 72.97% in FFY 2012.

Self-employment Rate

9.63% in FFY 2013,
down from 10% in FFY 2012

Competitive Employment 218 ■
Self-Employment 26 ■
Homemaker 24 ■
Business Enterprise Program 3 ■



In 2013, through the services of RSB, 270 individuals have been able to gain or retain employment. Their occupations are as follows:

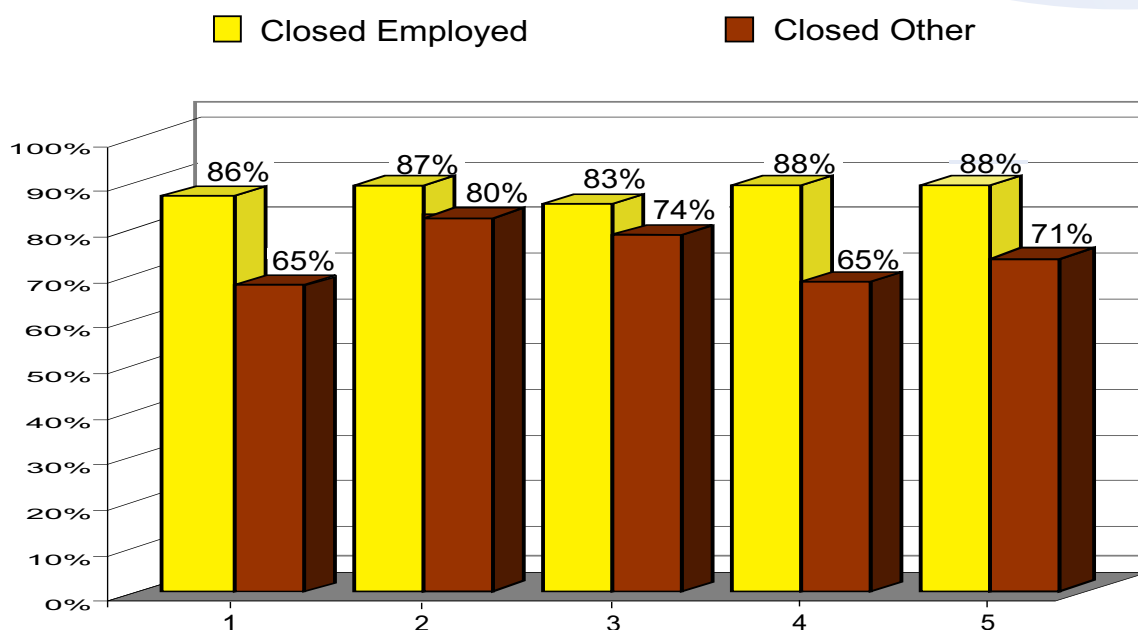
| | | | |
|------------------------------------|----|---------------------------------------|----|
| Management | 22 | Protective Service | 5 |
| Business and Financial | 7 | Food Preparation and | |
| Computer and Mathematical | 7 | Serving Related | 20 |
| Architecture and Engineering | 2 | Building and Grounds Cleaning | |
| Life, Physical, and Social Science | 1 | and Maintenance | 15 |
| Community and Social Service | 10 | Personal Care and Service | 30 |
| Legal | 2 | Sales and Related | 19 |
| Education, Training, and Library | 17 | Office and Administrative Support | 52 |
| Arts, Design, Entertainment, | | Farming Fishing and Forestry | 8 |
| Sports, and Media | 8 | Construction and Extraction | 1 |
| Healthcare Practitioners | | Installation, Maintenance, and Repair | 6 |
| and Technical | 8 | Production | 11 |
| Healthcare Support | 9 | Transportation and Material Moving | 10 |

Consumer Satisfaction Survey

Consumer Satisfaction Surveys are administered to individuals after closing their Vocational Rehabilitation case with RSB. These surveys are administered on a monthly basis. Two different surveys are sent: a 14 question survey is sent to individuals whose cases are closed in competitive employment, and a similar 11 question survey is sent to individuals whose cases were closed in any status other than competitive employment.

The following is a random selection of those questions from the survey and their consumer satisfaction with RSB services.

Competitive Employment Overall Satisfaction Level 87%
Status other than Competitive Employment Overall Satisfaction Level 72%



1. The choice of services available from RSB was sufficient to meet my needs.
2. I received services from RSB in a reasonable amount of time.
3. RSB staff helped me build my confidence in my abilities.
4. My rehabilitation plan was individualized to meet my goals.
5. I am pleased with the overall outcome of my experience in the vocational rehabilitation program provided by RSB.

Story of Success Lori Becker

Lori Becker is legally blind as a result of Stargardt's Disease. She came to Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) in 2010. At that time she was working as a Senior Account Manager for a political fund-raising company in St. Louis. Lori was responsible for consulting, political fund-raising, and public relations tasks. RSB worked with Lori in this role and provided adaptive technologies, such as a screen magnifier called I-Zoom, as well as CCTVs, both portable and desktop. These assistive technology devices provided magnification, allowing her to access her work in the office and while in the field.



She worked with her Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC), Katherine Cronin, to determine a new vocational direction. Lori worked to complete her Bachelor's degree in Public Relations with tuition support from RSB. Upon graduating, Ms. Becker worked with Ms. Cronin to explore future options. Her VRC recommended that she attend Starkloff Disability Institute's "Job's Readiness Course" for employment ready persons with disabilities. Ms. Becker learned skills in resume writing, disability disclosure, and interviewing skills. She completed the course in 2013.

Lori was approached by the Co-Directors of Starkloff Disability Institute, to become their Director of Communication and Development. Lori is responsible for fund-raising, public relations campaigns and promotion of the mission of Starkloff Disability Institute. The position requires her to be able to access print and electronic media daily. She uses both her desktop and portable CCTVs. She also utilizes a desktop pc as well as I-Zoom. Ms. Becker is very comfortable using the accessibility features on her computer for magnification purposes.

Lori states that she enjoys her job and its duties. She enjoys its mission to "Create a world that welcomes all people with disabilities by: Empowering them, influencing the non-disabled, serving as liaison between the two, and working toward economic independence through employment." —Starkloff Disability Institute

FFY 2012 Blind Agency Standards and Indicators

SUMMARY OF RSB PERFORMANCE

Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, requires the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to establish evaluation standards and performance indicators for the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program that include outcomes and related measures of program performance. RSB passed 5 of the 6 federal performance indicators in standard 1, and the required minority service rate ratio in federal performance indicator 2.1.

GENERAL INFORMATION

There are a total of 80 state vocational rehabilitation agencies or commissions that provide rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities in the United States and associated territories. Currently, 24 states have a separate vocational rehabilitation agency or commission that provides services exclusively for consumers who are blind or visually impaired. The skills of blindness are markedly different from the skills required by other disabled persons. The methodology of instructing the blind and confronting the issues of blindness in our society require the development of specialized service programs, with service delivery by specialized personnel.

Highlights of 2013

- ♦ **RSB served 4,731 individuals with blindness/visual impairments in 2013.**
- ♦ 1,510 individuals were served in the Older Blind Independent Living Program and 900 closed successfully rehabilitated.
- ♦ 386 individuals received case management services in the Prevention of Blindness Program, screening 1,682 individuals for intra ocular pressure and other eye conditions.
- ♦ The Vocational Rehabilitation Program served 2,157 individuals, closing 270 in successful employment.
- ♦ 428 children received services in the Children's Services Program.
- ♦ 250 individuals were served in the Independent Living Program and 108 closed successfully rehabilitated.
- ♦ 40 Business Enterprise Program facilities, including 1 military installation, 30 managers, employing 796 people, with gross sales at \$36,160,860.

Federal Standards and Performance Indicators for FFY 2012

| Evaluation standard 1 assesses VR's impact on employment. Standard 1 includes six performance indicators, three of which are primary indicators. | RSB's Performance | Standard Requirement |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1.1 Difference between the number of individuals exiting the VR program who achieved an employment outcome during the current performance period and the number of individuals exiting the VR program who achieved an employment outcome during the previous period. | Exceeded Previous Period by 3 | Equal or Exceed Previous Period |
| 1.2 The percentage of individuals exiting the program during the performance period who have achieved an employment outcome after receiving services. | 77.89% | 68.9% |
| 1.3 The percentage who exit the VR program in employment in integrated settings with or without ongoing support services, self-employment, or BEP (Business Enterprise Program) employment with hourly rate of earnings equivalent to at least the federal or state minimum wage rate, whichever is higher, based on all the individuals exiting the program who have achieved an employment outcome after receiving services. | 92.21% | 35.4% |
| 1.4 The percentage of those individuals identified in indicator 1.3 who have significant disabilities. | 96.38% | 89.0% |
| 1.5 The ratio of the average hourly earnings of all individuals in competitive employment to the average hourly earnings of all employed in the state. | .68 | .59 |
| 1.6 The difference in the percentage of individuals who at program entry reported their income as the largest single source of support, and the percentage that reported their personal income as the largest single source of support at program exit. | 29.58 | 30.4 |
| Performance indicator 2.1 measures how successfully an agency is at ensuring that individuals from minority backgrounds have equal access to VR services (minority service rate compared to nonminority service rate). | | |
| 2.1 The ratio of the percent of individuals with a minority background to the percent of individuals without a minority background exiting the program who received VR services. | .872 with 154 minorities | .80 with \geq than 100 |

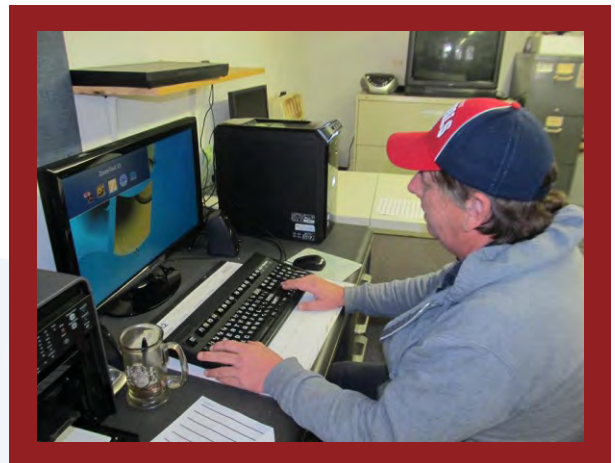
Story of Success

Steve Crews

Steve Crews came to Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) in 2012. Mr. Crews is the CEO and General Manager of SAC Development, Inc., located in Desloge, Missouri. SAC Development, Inc., is a home construction company. Mr. Crews was diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa causing him difficulty accessing print information in the workplace and problems with traveling safely.



His Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC), Donald Goosens, coordinated services provided to Mr. Crews. Jane Thomas provided orientation and mobility services. He learned skills to navigate safely in a variety of environments, including indoors, street crossing, stairways, and shopping. Mr. Crews worked with a Rehabilitation Teacher, Mary Hock, who provided training at home, including, using bump dots, organization using the Pen Friend for labeling, and meal preparation.



Ms. Hock provided training in the workplace in the use of a Talking Caller ID and Snow Digital Magnifier allowing him greater access to print information. In addition to the magnifier, JAWS for Windows allows Mr. Crews to access computer information such as searching MLS listings and other websites. Similarly, Mr. Crews was provided the KURZWEIL 1000, a text-to-speech program that reads typed media from a letter or a book. Mr. Crews uses a Closed Circuit Television to read floor plans by projecting the magnified image onto a wall.



Mr. Crews is able to manage all aspects of his business from ordering supplies to checking firsthand on projects his company is working on. Steven Crews has established himself in the business of home building and construction in the Parkland area of St. Francois County. Training and services provided by RSB, such as computer enhancements, have been a part of the great success enjoyed by Mr. Crews, and SAC Development, Inc.

Vision for the Future

RSB's Vision Statement reads:

An organization of highly skilled and professional staff at all levels who through their synergism create a dynamic agency that is a State and National leader in blindness rehabilitation.

As RSB strives to create opportunities for the personal and vocational success of blind or visually impaired clients, the SRC believes that with the proper training, alternative skills and assistive technology, those individuals who are blind can be vocationally, socially and economically competitive.

The SRC will continue to work cooperatively with RSB to improve the services offered to meet what we consider to be the unique rehabilitation needs of clients with visual disabilities. The following top five strategic priorities were developed by the SRC to ensure ongoing success for visually impaired Missourians:

1. Promote the full inclusion, participation, and integration of Missouri blind and severely visually impaired in the economic, social, cultural and educational mainstream of society.
2. Through the SRC's advisory capacity assure that appropriate education and rehabilitation services increase the employment rate of blind and visually impaired in Missouri.
3. Promote and assure the continuation of specialized vocational rehabilitation services to consumers who are blind and severely visually impaired through specially trained professional staff with unique skills and knowledge of blindness.
4. In partnership with RSB, develop, agree to, and review the annual state goals and priorities in preparation of the state plan and evaluate the effectiveness of services.
5. In partnership with RSB, conduct statewide comprehensive needs assessment to determine the unmet rehabilitation needs of the blind and severely visually impaired in Missouri.



2013 District Map

Missouri Rehabilitation Services for the Blind **800-592-6004**

Option 1
Kansas City North
615 E 13th St. Rm 409
Kansas City MO 64106
816-889-2677

Option 7
Kansas City South
4309 East 50th Terr. Ste B
Kansas City MO 64130
816-929-7171

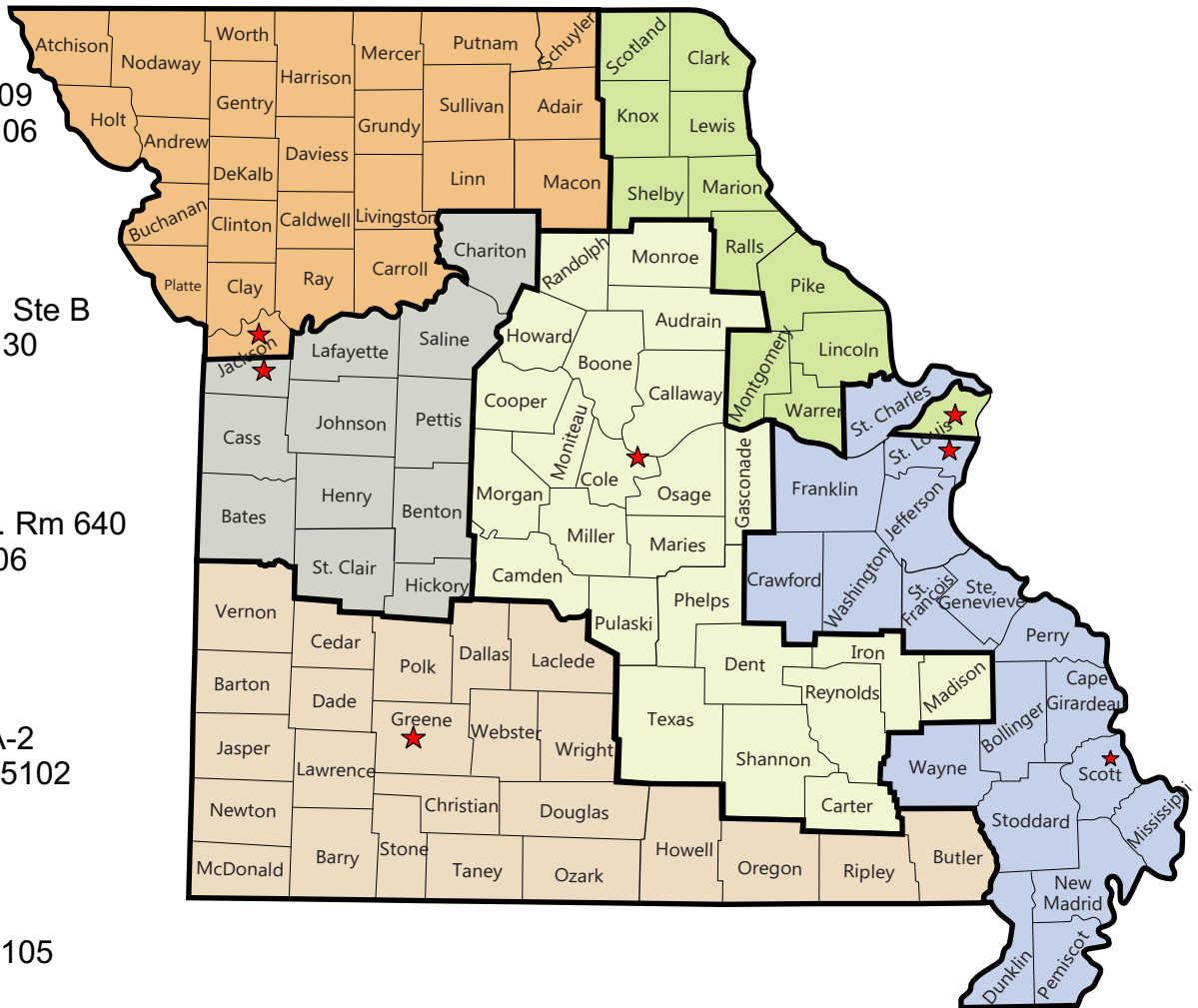
Option 5
Southwest
149 Park Central Sq. Rm 640
Springfield MO 65806
417-895-6386

Option 2
Mid-MO
3418 Knipp Dr. Ste A-2
Jefferson City MO 65102
573-751-2714

Option 3
St Louis North
9900 Page Ave. Ste 105
St. Louis MO 63132
314-264-7601

Option 6
St Louis South
3867 Magnolia Ave.
St Louis MO 63110
314-933-7311

Option 4
St Louis South Satellite Office
106 Arthur St Ste E
Sikeston MO 63801



RSB Administrative Office
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www.dss.mo.gov/fsd/rsb/index.htm